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REMARKS

The application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated July 3, 2006. Claims 1-33 were pending. By this Amendment, new claim 34 has been added, and claim 26 has been amended, to clarify, without narrowing, a scope of the claimed invention. Accordingly, claims 1-34 are now pending, with claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 being in independent form.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 9-14, 18-22, 25 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,052,445 to Bashoura et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,437,871 to Yuki. Claim 26 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Bashoura. Claims 31 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Bashoura and in view of Yuki. Claims 3, 4, 7, 8, 15-17, 21, 23-25, 29 and 30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Yuki and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,381,527 to Inniss et al. Claims 27 and 28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly unpatentable over Bashoura in view of Inniss.

Applicant has carefully considered the Examiner's comments and the cited art, and respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentable over the cited art, for at least the following reasons.

This application relates to improved features of a network facsimile device wherein registered destination information includes for each registered destination, a plurality of address information (for example, an IP address, an electronic mail address and a telephone number) respectively corresponding to a plurality of communication modes. Before document image information corresponding to a scanned document is transmitted to a destination, an operator, using input means provided with the network facsimile device, selects any one of the plurality of

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communication modes available for communicating through the network facsimile device with the selected destination, and then requests that the image information be transmitted to the corresponding address of the designated destination through the selected communication mode. Each of independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 addresses these features, as well as additional features.

Bashoura, as understood by Applicant, proposes a system wherein a fax director device connected to a personal computer and to a standard fax machine receives (transparent to the fax machine) an output of the fax machine, decodes a telephone number which is generated by the fax machine, and then delivers the decoded telephone number to the personal computer where the telephone number is utilized to locate a corresponding Internet address and/or e-mail address in a look-up table. If a corresponding Internet or e-mail address is found in the table, the fax is converted to a computer file, and then sent to the matched Internet or e-mail address. However, if no corresponding Internet or e-mail address is found in the table, the decoded telephone number is utilized for normal fax delivery over a telephone line.

The Office Action acknowledges that the cited art does not allow an operator to select one of the plural communication modes for communicating with a destination, but cites Bashoura, column 4, lines 34-37. However, Bashoura does not cure the deficiencies of the cited art.

Bashoura, column 4, lines 1-42, states as follows:

Instead of being received by a telephone line, however, the dialing from the local fax machine 1 is received by the fax director 3 and decoded by the telephone number decoder 41 under the control of the processor 31, both contained with the fax director 3.

The decoded telephone number is then delivered under the control of the processor 31 to the local computer 5.

Within the local computer 5 is the table 7. As best illustrated in FIG. 4, the table 7 is simply a data structure containing a plurality of records 61, each one of which includes a telephone number 63 and a corresponding Internet address, such as an IP address 65 or an E-mail address 67.

The telephone number table 7 in the local computer 5 is easily generated and

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maintained using well-known programming techniques. When it is known that a potential fax recipient has the ability to receive a fax over the Internet, the recipient's telephone number and his receiving Internet address is stored in the table 7.

In practice, there are many methods by which a fax can actually be sent over the Internet. If the recipient has an IP address, the fax can be sent directly to that IP address using file transfer protocol ("FTP"). In this case, the IP address would be stored in association with the telephone number at the appropriate location in the telephone table 7.

Many users of the Internet, however, do not have their own IP address. Instead, they connect to the Internet through servers maintained by others, such as Independent Servers Providers ("ISPs"). These temporary users of the Internet typically have an E-mail address. For those Internet users who do not have their own IP address, their E-mail address can also be stored in the table 7, as illustrated in FIG. 4.

Some Internet users, of course, will have both an IP address and an E-mail address. In this case, both addresses can be stored in the table 7 or, at the option of the user, one or the other. Some users may opt to store only the IP address in those cases in which both are available.

Upon receiving the telephone number to which the fax should be sent from the fax director 3, the local computer 5 looks up that telephone number in the table 7. Again, this is done using well-known programming techniques.

Thus, the user who enters address information that is stored in the look-up table is typically the operator of the personal computer, and not the operator of the facsimile machine. As previously pointed out, operation of the fax director and look-up table in the system proposed by Bashoura is transparent to the user at the fax machine who, in Bashoura, merely wants to transmit a facsimile and does not care about the communication mode.

Yuki, as understood by Applicant, proposes a facsimile apparatus with adaptors for communication with plural partners through a public switched telephone network, a local area network and an integrated services digital network. Yuki further proposes that when the user selects a destination for a facsimile, the facsimile apparatus automatically determines the cheapest communication mode for transmitting the facsimile to the destination, and transmits the facsimile to the destination via the cheapest communication mode.

Inmiss, as understood by Applicant, proposes a system for distribution of messages utilizing a data processing system, wherein a distribution channel is selected in response to a user

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selection of a particular distribution media. If transmission via the selected distribution channel fails, an alternate distribution media is selected and the message is converted to that alternate distribution media. Inniss was cited only against dependent claims in the present application.

Applicant does not find disclosure or suggestion in the cited art, however, of a network facsimile device wherein for each registered destination, a plurality of address information (for example, an IP address, an electronic mail address and a telephone number) respectively corresponding to a plurality of communication modes are registered, and before document image information corresponding to a scanned document is transmitted to a destination, an operator, using input means provided with the network facsimile device, selects any one of the plurality of communication modes available for communicating through the network facsimile device with the selected destination, and then requests that the image information be transmitted to the corresponding address of the designated destination through the selected communication mode, as provided by the subject matter of claim 1.

Independent claims 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28 are patentably distinct from the cited art for at least similar reasons.

Accordingly, for at least the above-stated reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, 10, 22-24 and 26-28, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentable over the cited art.

In view of the amendments to the claims and remarks hereinabove, Applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant earnestly solicits the allowance of the application.

If a petition for an extension of time is required to make this response timely, this paper should be considered to be such a petition. The Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge any

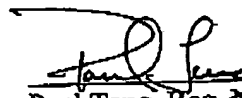
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fees that may be required in connection with this amendment and to credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account No. 03-3125.

If a telephone interview could advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,


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